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ABSTRACT

This document discusses the adult education component of two Canadian women's organizations from a historical perspective. The two organizations chosen, the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of Canada have traditionally emphasized the education of women. The six sections of the paper cover the education mission of the two organizations from their founding before 1900 to the 1970's. The first section presents a historical perspective of adult education prior to 1900, and section II concentrates on the early years before the turn of the century. Section III covers the early 1900's; the Depression and Second World War period are examined in the fourth section. The fifth section covers the activities of both organizations in adult education in the 1950's 1960's, and 1970's. The final section examines the role of adult education in the YWCA and the Women's Institute, comparing their purpose, function, and future roles. References and an 11-page bibliography including unpublished materials, Canadian archives, and personal correspondence complete the document. (KC)

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AN HISTORICAL STUDY OF ADULT EDUCATION IN TWO CANADIAN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS: THE FEDERATED WOMEN'S INSTITUTES OF CANADA AND THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF CANADA 1870 - 1978

by

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B.P.E. University of British Columbia 1965.

A Major Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the requirement for the Degree of

Master of Education

in the Faculty of Graduate Studies

Department of Adult Education

We accept this paper as conforming to the required standard.

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The University of British Columbia

1979

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		PAGE
	PREFACE	1
I.	AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ADULT EDUCATION PRIOR TO 1900.	3
II.	THE EARLY YEARS	10
	1. The Y.W.C.A.	10
	2. The Women's Institute	16
	(a) The birth of the Women's Institute	16
	(b) Domestic Science Education	19
III.	EARLY 1900's	21
	1. The Y.W.C.A.: Industrial Work	21
	2. The Women's Institute	24
	(a) Co-operative work with the Department of Agriculture	24
	(b) Loan papers	27
IV.	DEPRESSION AND SECOND WAR PERIOD	29
	1. The Y.W.C.A.	29
	(a) Depression Years	29
	(b) Second War Period	32
	2. The Women's Institute	36
	(a) Citizenship Education	36
	(b) Study Circles	38
	(c) Cottage Industries	41
V.	ADULT EDUCATION IN THE FIFTIES, SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES	43
	1. The Y.W.C.A.	43
	(a) Young Adult Clubs	43
	(b) Day time programs for Women	46
	(c) Job upgrading	49

PAGE

(d) Roles of Women 50

2. The Women's Institute 53

(a) Co-operative Adult Education 53

(b) Social Action 57

VI. THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN THE Y.W.C.A. AND THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE 60

1. Function and Purpose of Adult Education 60

(a) In the Y.W.C.A. of Canada 60

(b) In the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada 62

(c) Relationship of Adult Education to the Function of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute. 62

2. Comparison of the role of Adult Education in the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute 65

3. The future role of Adult Education in the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute 71

REFERENCES 74

BIBLIOGRAPHY 80

(a) Books 80

(b) Journals, Periodicals, Pamphlets & Unpublished Materials 85

(c) From the Public Archives - Ottawa 90

(d) Personal Correspondence and/or discussions 91

This paper will document the adult education component of two Canadian women's organizations, from an historical perspective.

In choosing the criteria for the theme of this paper the writer wished to identify with:

(a) women's organizations
(b) Canadian focus
(c) historical base
(d) adult education.

During the winter of 1978 correspondence was initiated to eight national women's organizations that are and have been concerned with the education of women in Canada.

The Canadian Association for Adult Education's Committee on Learning Opportunities for Women was very helpful in identifying these women's organizations.

The organizations contacted were:

(1) Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs
(2) Canadian Women's Christian Temperance Union
(3) Canadian Federation of University Women
(4) Federated Women's Institutes of Canada
(5) International Order of the Daughters of the Empire
(6) National Council of Women
(7) Women's Association of the United Church of Canada
(8) Young Women's Christian Association of Canada.

In correspondence with these eight women's organizations, it was quickly evident that some would not meet the four criteria that had been selected as a basis for this paper, i.e.

the National Council of Women is not directly involved in the education of women, but plays an advocacy role.

The two organizations chosen, the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada and the Young Women's Christian Association of Canada are historical Canadian women's organizations with a major emphasis in their goals being the education of women.

The study of women's history in Canada with particular reference to women's organizations is in its infancy. Only in the last few years have historians become interested in the activities of women and women's organizations in the Canadian past.

To the writer's knowledge, there has been very little written about the history of adult education with reference to women's organizations, and it is hoped that this paper will make a contribution in this field.

For the purposes of this paper a definition of adult education was taken from the 1919 Report on Adult Education in the United Kingdom, where the authors identified adult education as:

> "all the deliberate efforts by which men and women attempt to satisfy their thirst for knowledge, to equip themselves for their responsibilities as citizens and members of society or to find opportunities for self expression"(1).

I AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ADULT EDUCATION PRIOR TO 1900

Adult education had its start in Great Britain in the religious, political and scientific developments of the times. Adult Education's history in Great Britain has reflected different currents of thought and has drawn influence from religion, economic reconstruction, scientific discoveries, political agitation and social unrest. The opening decades of the nineteenth century were an age of educational reform. Attempts to provide for the education of adults came from three main currents: religion, physical science and social and political agitation. The need to give the poor moral and religious knowledge gave the impetus to the formation of the earliest Adult Schools. The Industrial Revolution had created a new kind of industry and industrial population and a new demand for scientific knowledge which led to the development of the Mechanics Institutes. Political and social movements which grew out of the political and social ferment of the period used adult education to prepare citizens for a new social order. Three democratic movements in England during the first half of the nineteenth century, the co-operative movement, trade unionism and chartism mingled adult education, political reform and economic reconstruction as hardly distinguishable elements in an effort to prepare a new social order.

In the United States, in addition to religion, and innovations in technology, forces such as upward mobility of the working class, urbanization, immigration, emergence of

trade unions and the vastness of the American frontier all produced a need for knowledge. The Lyceum Movement was a means to upward mobility of the working class, as it was one of the most powerful instruments for the mobilization of public opinion by providing a mechanism for ordinary citizens to study together. The Chautauqua movement had its basis in religious studies as it was formed to provide religious education for Sunday School teachers. By the mid nineteenth century, the need for knowledge of new technology, especially agricultural methods led to the Grange, Farmers Institutes and Agricultural Societies.

Canada borrowed very heavily from the early developments of Adult Education in Great Britain and the United States. Canada has been a nation of immigrants and these immigrants because of their heritage brought with them many institutional forms from Great Britain. Social, geographic and economic conditions similar to those in the United States influenced adult education developments in Canada.

One of the most significant adult education movements was that of the Mechanics' Institute of Great Britain, an example of a form of adult education Canada borrowed from elsewhere. The desire of mechanics to learn something new about applied science, to improve their knowledge of new trades and new skills led to the organization of the Mechanics Institutes in 1823. This was reflected in its purpose:

> "To promote a knowledge of general science and diffuse rational information to the workers"(2).

The Mechanics Institutes in Great Britain were the first to dispel the widespread notion that education was the prerogative of the rich and a grudging gift to the poor. They symbolized the fact that education is the right of all people and not a gift to be dispensed by those in power. As the adult education historian E.A. Corbett noted:

> "And so when we think of the Mechanics Institute movement, let us give it this place in history. It carried on the battle for freedom with the conviction that education is the right of all the people, and not a gift to be dispensed by those in power. The Mechanics Institutes performed this greatest of all services that they managed to establish the fact that the laboring class was destined to be a rational agent and that the right of all the people to education and culture was even more primary and pressing than the right to labor or the right to vote"(3).

Prior to 1820 various book clubs, literary societies, newspapers, music and art associations existed in Lower Canada, Upper Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. At this time there was limited public interest in educational matters because pioneer families were so occupied with the problems of staying alive and making a living, they had little time for all but the most rudimentary education.

In his study, Foster Vernon concludes that the earliest educational organization recorded in Canada was an agricultural society formed in Newark, Ontario in 1792, followed by one in

York (Toronto) in 1806. The first educational society not related to agriculture formed in York in 1820 when:

> "a group of citizens banded together for the purpose of mutual improvement as the York Literary Society"(4).

The first Mechanics' Institute in Canada was established in York in 1830, and from that beginning a number of Mechanics' Institutes were established in Upper Canada. As Donald Wilson in his article about adult education in Upper Canada noted:

> "by mid-century Mechanics' Institutes had been incorporated in Whitby, Hamilton, Dundas, St. Catherines, Niagara on the Lake, Simcoe, Brantford, Paris, Woodstock, Stratford, and Mitchell"(5).

Parallel to the movement for Mechanics' Institutes was that of literary societies. Two important literary societies of the 1840's were the Toronto Antheneum and the Canadian Institute, which were formed for the purpose of debate and discussion on literary subjects. These two societies merged in 1855 to form the Royal Canadian Institute, the oldest existing society in Canada today (6).

Various other voluntary organizations developed in the 19th century for the purpose of helping adults to improve themselves intellectually and culturally.

* 1851 - Young Men's Christian Association
* 1856 - Ontario Literary Society
* 1856 - Ontario Temperance Club
* 1857 - Canadian Education Museum

* 1858 - La Societe Historique de Montreal
* 1870 - Young Women's Christian Association
* 1874 - Women's Christian Temperance Union
* 1887 - Farmer's Institute
* 1893 - National Council of Women
* 1897 - Women's Institute
* 1900 - Frontier College (7).

So while certain individual organizations had been founded, historians agree that there was no adult education movement as such in Canada by the 1870's. When it is realized that at that time education at elementary school was still not compulsory in many provinces one can understand why adult education was beyond the comprehension of most. Adult education for most had little or no relevance to the daily activities of land clearing, harvesting and farming, in which the majority of the people were engaged. Lack of a good education was no great handicap to a man provided he had a strong back and two willing hands. In such a s ciety, technical education for adults had little relevance, and all attempts to introduce it failed until the advent of Vocational and Technical schools toward the turn of the century.

Access to education in Canada in the 19th century was very much a function of social class. For the working class, education was difficult to obtain and this was especially true for women. Even by 1870 a woman wanting to obtain a better education found it socially unacceptable. As noted by Phillips:

> "A woman had to enter the classroom ten minutes before the other male students and was required to wear a veil. She was asked to sit alone at the back of the room, retire five minutes before the lecture ended and leave the premises without speaking to the male students"(8).

Although as early as 1855, McGill University offered classes for women, it wasn't until 1875 at Mt. Allison University that Grace Ann Lockhart was awarded the first degree granted to a woman in Canada (9). According to Vernon's research the earliest instance of adult education for women was:

> "a private class for ladies ... offered in the Grosvenor School in Ottawa in 1859 by a Reverend H. Borthwick who ... used the school from four to six in the afternoon to assist eighteen young ladies with their study of English"(10).

In the last quarter of the 19th century women were largely responsible for cooking, laundry, sewing, gardening, preserving foods, tending of livestock doctoring, nursing, teaching and raising children. There were however many middle and upper class women who were in a position to have servants and it was these women who had the leisure hours which allowed them to benefit from what little education was available to them.

For most of these "leisured ladies" the avenue to personal and social betterment began in the more traditional charitable organizations such as the churches and the temperance movements. The last decades of the 19th century saw the

growth of new organizations to tackle problems arising from immigration, urbanisation and developing technology. As Canada increasingly underwent social and economic change, more women began to think of collective action. Womens' suffrage became an active issue in the 1880's and women everywhere, whether they wanted to vote or go to university, or not, felt a levening of interest and enthusiasm, and a widening of their horizons.

Thus in the last part of the 19th century several women's organizations which saw education as a tool to help them achieve some of their goals were formed. It is interesting to note that the four earliest women's organizations formed in Canada - The Young Women's Christian Association; The Women's Christian Temperance Union; The National Council of Women; and The Federated Women's Institute of Canada - are still in existence today.

In summary, prior to 1900, educational opportunities for Canadian adults, and especially women, were scarce. Then as now, adult education was largely a middle class activity reaching only a small proportion of adults. The Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute were early leaders in promoting educational opportunities for women in Canada. In fact they were the only two women's organizations in Canada prior to 1900 that made an attempt to provide educational opportunities for women.

II THE EARLY YEARS

1 - The Y.W.C.A.

Just as in England twenty years earlier, the beginning of adult education in the early Canadian Y.W.C.A.'s centered around helping with the educational needs of immigrant women who were crowding into the cities and working in factories.

The early 1870's saw a large and steady flow of people from the British Isles coming to settle in Canada. The first Y.W.C.A.'s in Canada were created primarily to house these women who settled in the larger cities.

Five Young Women's Christian Associations were formed in Canada between 1870 and 1875:

- 1870 Saint John, New Brunswick
- 1873 Toronto
- 1874 Montreal
- 1875 Quebec City and Halifax

Each of the early associations Mary Quayle Innis wrote:

> "received young women who came as strangers to the city, obtaining for them board and employment, attending to temporal and moral welfare and providing a reading room and library for young women"(11).

The Y.W.C.A. has played a pioneer role in adult education. Early reports indicate that the first evening classes for employed women in Canada were organized by the Y.W.C.A. in the late 1870's and early 1880's. English and bookkeeping were the first topics studied.

In 1870, the Y.W.C.A. in Saint John was conducting a mission school to enable young women who were working in factories to secure a better education. The women were provided with books and stationery, and their instruction included lessons in reading, writing, grammar and spelling. In 1875, the Halifax Y.W.C.A. was associated with a night school where elementary English, writing and reading subjects were taught to women employed in the cotton factory.

The Quebec Women's Christian Association records the opening of an "Industrial Home" in 1875, intended to provide a helping hand to "erring ones", who might be taught to learn such skills as knitting and sewing.

A library and reading room were provided in 1876 by the Montreal Y.W.C.A. and in the same year a working women's home was opened. Among the activities of the early years was a course of medical lectures at which "Bible women" and matrons of institutions were admitted free. In the 1870's, the Montreal association was the only agency to offer training for nurses in that city. The classes in nursing were conducted by prominent doctors.

In 1885, in the Kingston Y.W.C.A., "Bible women" were employed to visit the poor and invite the women to come to the association rooms. Women were taught sewing and Bible study and their children reading, penmanship and games.

The beginning of adult education in the Toronto Y.W.C.A. was a response to the increase in the number of women employed

in business offices and factories. Beginning in the early 1880's the Y.W.C.A. introduced a number of classes in book-keeping and shorthand. The latter included instruction in phonography, which was a machine produced stenographic system. This was a pioneering effort and was confirmed by research done by the Collective Collective:

> "Isaac Pitman's invention of a phonetic system (1877) made phonography an efficient method for use in business and law courts. In 1884 the Toronto Y.W.C.A. was first to teach phonography to women"(12).

Montreal and Hamilton Y.W.C.A.'s offered similar courses starting in 1884 even before business colleges appear to have been considered. The first such course was not given in the public schools until the following year.

In 1888, in the Toronto association, special classes were opened for the training of professional dressmakers and for helping young women make their own clothes and hats. In 1892 a "cutting by chart" class flourished in the Toronto Y.W.C.A.

Lending libraries were functioning in the Y.W.C.A.'s of Montreal and Quebec as early as 1875. Toronto, Quebec, Halifax, Kingston, London and Hamilton Y.W.C.A.'s were all reported to have libraries before the turn of the century, for the educational advancement of young women. Y.W.C.A. libraries were at this time of great importance, for by 1900, the only provinces in Canada with a free library system were Ontario and British Columbia, and the only municipal libraries were

in Halifax, Saint John, Winnipeg, Westmount and Victoria.

In 1892, the Hamilton Y.W.C.A., with the encouragement of Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless, a Board member, opened a school of Domestic Science in co-operation with the Hamilton School Board, where many women were trained to be teachers of Domestic Science. Through the energy and zeal of Mrs. Hoodless, this venture met with greater success than the Board had ever dreamed of. At the beginning of the first year, one pupil was enrolled and nine months later the number swelled to one hundred and twenty six women (13). Ten years later this school was taken over by the Provincial Department of Agriculture, and endowed by Sir William MacDonald to found MacDonald Institute in Guelph, where teachers could be trained for home economics extension work in rural areas. Here, as was the case in so many other program areas, experimental work undertaken by the Y.W.C.A. grew into a new educational field.

The Y.W.C.A. of Montreal, in the 1890's, offered courses for women in "domestic service" - cooking, sewing and home-nursing. Similar programs were established in the Y.W.C.A.'s of Toronto, Hamilton, Kingston, Brantford, Galt, Peterborough and London before the turn of the century. The tremendous number of women entering the work force as "domestic servants" led many Y.W.C.A.'s to open schools of cookery to train domestics.

In 1892 the first school of cooking in Canada was opened by the Ottawa Y.W.C.A. It quickly grew from a school to train domestics to a school for "Ladies of Leisure", and

eventually for Normal School students. The school aimed at the diffusion of scientific knowledge relating to food. The standard was high, and only those ladies who passed an examination obtained a diploma. The school became famous throughout the province, and within a few years, took on the ambitious project of training teachers in Domestic Science. By 1898, 312 women were enrolled in the school, 151 of whom were training to be teachers of Domestic Science. Through the influence of this school and the continuing efforts of the Ottawa Y.W.C.A. Board of Directors, Domestic Science eventually became part of the curriculum of the public schools in Ottawa. An unpublished history of the Ottawa School of Cookery indicates the reception from the School Board:

> "In 1898, a deputation from our Board interviewed the Ottawa School Board with regard to the establishment of Domestic Science courses in the schools. We were most kindly received but no action was taken by the School Board until several years later"(14).

The Ottawa Y.W.C.A. School of Cookery flourished until 1915, when the influx of technical schools in the city took over the market.

In 1893, the Toronto Y.W.C.A., established a School of Cookery for ladies of leisure and wealth. The classes were conducted by a Miss Rutherford from England and consisted of lessons in "superior" and "plain" cooking. By 1895 five graduates of the school were conducting private classes of

their own, and seven graduates were teaching the Toronto Y.W.C.A. classes. The school was expanded in 1894 and offered two courses in Invalid Cookery in co-operation with the Toronto General Hospital. In 1895, 52 nurses were registered in these courses (15).

A demand for a variety of educational programs became evident in many Y.W.C.A.'s by the 1890's. Records from Hamilton, Brantford, Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa associations show that reading, penmanship, English, French, elocution, dressmaking, millinery, shorthand, Bible study, cooking and china painting were the most consistently offered adult programs nearing the turn of the century.

In those years, the Y.W.C.A., made a deliberate choice of a positive educational and social type of activity for young women which no other organization offered. In those beginning years, pioneer work in adult education for women was initiated by the Y.W.C.A., and later, when it had developed to a further stage, passed into the auspices of other organizations. This continued to be the practice throughout the next century.

2 - The Women's Institute

a) The Beginnings: The Birth of the Women's Institute.

In the winter of 1896 a young farmer, Erland Lee, secretary of the local Farmer's Institute of Saltfleet township (Ontario) heard an outspoken woman criticize a professor of bacteriology, at an experimental union meeting in Guelph. Lee heard Adelaide Hoodless attack the professor, and ask him why great efforts were being made to disseminate information about the care and breeding of livestock, while little was being done for the health of women and children. Impressed, Lee invited her to speak at a future Farmer's Institute meeting in Saltfleet. She accepted the invitation, and suggested, in the course of her address, that the women form an organization for women, similar to the Farmer's Institute for men. Lee, who was chairman of the meeting, asked how many would attend a similar meeting the next week if Mrs. Hoodless would come to Stoney Creek. There was a good response, so the meeting was planned.

When Adelaide Hoodless arrived at Stoney Creek, she found awaiting her in Squires Hall, 101 women and one man, Erland Lee. Her address was practical and inspirational. She emphasized that if men needed an institute, and if what they learned from it was growing better crops and producing better livestock, then an institute for the women would be equally beneficial in their work. She felt an Institute for women was much more necessary than a Farmer's Institute, since their work

was much more important than that of the men, concerned as it was with the home and the care of the children, rather than with crops and livestock. She believed there should be a unique kind of education for women as homemakers, and that the education of mothers should be as important as the education of farmers. Adelaide maintained that it was very wrong to educate women without consideration of the special needs of women as homemakers:

> "Canadian women today learn a great many things, except those things which will be of greatest value to them as women - the rearing of children and the proper management of a home"(16).

Her convictions about the educational needs of women of her time centered around a special attention to sanitation. She suggested:

> "a better understanding of the economic and hygenic value of food and a more scientific care of children with a view to raising the general standard of life of farm people is needed"(17).

The women decided to organize a group affiliated with the Farmer's Institute. Thus February 19th, 1897, saw the formation of the Stoney Creek Women's Institute, the first of its kind in the world. Adelaide Hoodless mobilized many women and a few months after the Stoney Creek Women's Institute was founded she had a hand in the starting of a second one in Whitby and a third in Kemble, Ontario.

It is difficult to appreciate fully what the birth of the Women's Institute meant in the light of the social prejudices of the time. In her biographical article about Adelaide Hoodless, Ruth Howes described the situation:

> "Women's place was in the home and she was expected to stay there venturing outside only to do church work or perhaps attend the W.C.T.U., the dominant women's organization at that time"(18).

At first the Women's Institute was purely a social organization, but within a year of its founding, the women saw that they had a responsibility to reach out and educate other women. This was reflected in the first constitution of Stoney Creek Women's Institute, which stated:

> "the object of this Institute shall be to promote that knowledge of household science which shall lead to the improvement in household architecture with special attention to home sanitation, to a better understanding of economics and hygienic value of foods and fuels, and to a more scientific care of children with a view to raising the general standard of health of our people"(19).

The members of the first Institutes in Stoney Creek, Whitby and Kemble, saw, as their objective, studying and working together to raise their homes to the highest possible level. The women who could make the best bread, or do the best sewing, demonstrated their art to other members. More women then became involved. In 1899, eight members of the Stoney Creek Women's Institute worked on a paper on home management, which was produced as a pamphlet entitled, "Making a House a Home."

This was an innovation for the Women's Institute and the start of a new direction for the organization in the early 1900's.

In the early years, it became important for the women to be able to express themselves in groups, so they could speak to their friends and neighbours who might be interested in forming a Women's Institute. As the news of what had been done at Stoney Creek spread over Ontario, women who had confidence in speaking in front of groups were invited to address neighbouring communities.

From this beginning at Stoney Creek, the Institute idea spread rapidly from coast to coast in Canada. By 1903, twelve Institutes had been formed in Ontario with an active membership of 1500 women. It did not take long for other provinces to realize the value of the Women's Institute. British Columbia and Alberta organized their first Institute in 1909; Manitoba in 1910; New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Quebec and Prince Edward Island in 1911 and Nova Scotia in 1913.

The Women's Institute, a Canadian invention, was used as a model and developed into similar organizations in other countries. This culminated in the formation of a world wide organization of Institute Women - the Associated Country Women of the World.

b) Domestic Science Education

Household science or domestic science education was promoted by both the Y.W.C.A. and Women's Institute leaders in the early 1900's. The Women's Institute supported the School of Domestic Science formed by the Hamilton Y.W.C.A. and

worked to further the growth of domestic science education in Ontario. Women of the Institutes pressed for the formation of the Ontario Normal School of Domestic Science and Art which, when formed, grew to such proportions that by 1904 the MacDonald Institute at Guelph was opened.

Domestic science education was not just a matter of cooking and sewing. It was said to be:

> "the application of scientific principles to the management of a home. It teaches the values of proper food, domestic sanitation, prevention of diseases, economy and the care of children. In short it is a direct education for home-makers"(20).

Adelaide Hoodless, the founder of the first Women's Institute, was one of the early lecturers at MacDonald Institute, the first woman educator to be employed by the Ontario Government.

An excerpt from one of her lectures which she had first written for a Women's Institute meeting a year earlier, states:

> "the management of the home has more to do in the moulding of character than any other influence. We are therefore justified in an effort to secure a place for domestic science education in the foremost educational institutions of this country"(21).

III EARLY 1900's

1 - The Y.W.C.A.: Industrial Work

The expansion of the Y.W.C.A. movement between 1900 and 1912 kept pace with the accelerating rate of immigration. Nearly two million new women and children arrived in Canada between 1900 and 1911. At the turn of the century Y.W.C.A.'s had developed in fourteen cities across Canada, and by 1910 there were 31.

In the early 1900's, the number of women working in factories increased. Industrial work was well described as extension work, as it often involved the securing of an additional class room or building space in a part of a city convenient for factory workers. Peterborough Y.W.C.A. held meetings for women employed at the electrical works factories. London Y.W.C.A. organized two women's clubs in factories, with lectures on women's rights followed by singing. In Saint Thomas, large numbers of factory women came for lunch and noon time clubs that were arranged by the Y.W.C.A. Popular study topics were shirt-waist making and elocution. In 1909 the Kitchener association worked with women in the Star Whitewear and Biscuit Factory by holding regular noon meetings. The Kingston association furnished a room in the textile mill for use as a rest room for female employees. The women in the textile mill came into contact with the work of the Y.W.C.A. through this rest room, the first to be opened in Canada. Within months, two women's clubs in the textile mill were organized, and Y.W.C.A. secretaries spoke freely of the rights

of these women in lunch hour meetings.

At the sixth National Convention held in Montreal in 1907, it was recommended:

> "that in large industrial centres where many young women are employed, an effort be made to call and support a Secretary trained on industrial lines"(22).

It took a while for Y.W.C.A. secretaries to recognize that the most urgent needs of young women workers in industry were not spiritual. These Y.W.C.A. secretaries tried to find out what would be acceptable to the women workers in industry. The first breakthrough came when they caught hold of the idea that the only way to develop women was to give them a chance to develop themselves. Self governing clubs were organized, and the secretaries began to move into the role of advisor or consultant, and encouraged leadership to emerge from the group itself. As the women planned their own programs, it became clear that the bread and butter matters of living, better jobs and more education, were their real concerns.

The 1919 Annual Report of the Vancouver Y.W.C.A. speaks of over 300 women attending weekly meetings. Included were young women employed in stores, laundries, hotels, restaurants, offices, homes and factories. These women were grouped together in adult clubs which met in the evening. The club served as an avenue for personal development and linked the women to constructive social improvement. It developed leadership through its self government; personal efficiency through education and recreation and social responsibility through service.

The National Industrial Committee of the Dominion Council of the Y.W.C.A. established basic principles for the programs for industrial women across the country:

a. The development of group consciousness,

b. Self government,

c. Education along social and industrial lines,

d. The development of group leadership (23).

Although the Y.W.C.A.'s of the U.S.A. were the forerunners to act in matters concerning women workers in industry, demanding minimum wage laws, a shorter working day, and several other reforms urgently needed for the great mass of women workers, were visible in many Canadian Y.W.C.A.'s as well.

Adult education classes during the first world war period were devoted to home nursing and first aid. Nearly all associations formed adult clubs for newcomers such as the Shamrock Rose and Thistle Club in Toronto; the Loyalty Club in Brantford, the Overseas Club in St. Thomas, and the Welcome Club in Vancouver.

In Regina, classes were opened in literature, physical science, domestic science, dressmaking, Bible study, first aid, current events, home nursing, voice culture, German and French. During the war Simpsons department store offered to pay half the fee of any class for employees who had worked for three months with the firm. Many young women took advantage of this subsidy from Simpsons, who seems to have been the first employer to give such privileges to female employees (24).

2 - Women's Institute

a) Co-operative Work with the Department of Agriculture.

By 1901 the Women's Institute movement had grown so phenomenally that the Provincial Government of Ontario had considered it necessary to organize a Women's Institute branch in the Department of Agriculture. Laura Rose, an instructor at the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph, was the first government appointed organizer to work with the Women's Institutes of Ontario. Her first action on the job with the Department of Agriculture was to attend a meeting with the Stoney Creek Institute, where she delivered a paper on home nursing.

By 1903, as in the case of the Farmer's Institute, the Women's Institute was receiving strong financial support from the Ontario Department of Agriculture. This took the form of grants to the individual institutes based on the size of their membership. Seven full time organizers were paid by the Department of Agriculture in 1904 to help the women in rural areas of Ontario to organize new Institutes. This type of human and financial support enabled the Ontario Women's Institutes to grow to twenty-four groups with a membership of 4,500 by 1908.

The women were soon asking the government organizers for short courses in cooking, sewing, home nursing, nutrition and handicrafts, which were very quickly instituted. The format of the short courses usually consisted of a lecture followed by a question and answer period. In her history of

the Ontario Women's Institute, Viola Powell described the process used:

> "from the first, lectures and demonstrations on household topics were given by individual government organizers in many rural communities. The government organizer would spend 1 - 2 hours on a selected topic and at the end she would ask for questions from the ladies in attendance:(25).

In 1912 the Department of Agriculture conducted for eight Women's Institutes a one week course in the care and preparation of food. This proved popular so a year later an expanded three week course was initiated and given to 117 women. This included 21 one hour lessons on care, cooking and serving of food including menu planning.

In subsequent years short courses ranging from one day to three weeks were initiated by the Department of Agriculture by request of individual Institutes. The Sandiford report, which surveyed adult education in Canada prior to 1935 gives a good indication of the focus of the short courses from 1913 to 1915:

> "-Seventy-five two week courses with 1,767 in attendance.
> Subjects - sewing food values and cookery, home nursing and first aid.
> -Three one-week courses with 61 in attendance.
> Subjects - sewing and needlecraft.
> -Seventy-seven three day courses with 1,721 in attendance.
> Subjects - sewing, nutrition, home nursing, home decoration, handicrafts, utilization of wool.
> -Thirty-four one month courses with 1,350 in attendance.
> Subject - household science.

> -Three month courses were also held at seven centers with an enrolment of 349.
> Subject - household science education"(26).

Similar co-operative ventures were initiated by the Department of Agriculture in British Columbia and New Brunswick in 1912. Marianne Otty's history of the Women's Institute in New Brunswick notes:

> "the first Institute short course in New Brunswick was inaugurated at Sussex. Two-hundred and thirty-six women registered for this course lasting four days"(27).

The next year, short courses were offered by Institutes in Woodstock, Sussex and Chatham. Each lasted eleven days, with instruction by the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture in cooking, food values, waitress work, hygiene and sanitation, home nursing and sewing.

Short courses were a strong feature of Women's Institute work in New Brunswick. Courses were of varying lengths and were held in every rural area on a great variety of subjects. Otty writes:

> "a course which was very popular at this time was that of making a home-made dress form with brown paper and paste. This was given in sixty-eight branches and one branch reported afterwards making thirty of these aids to the home dressmakers"(28).

After a Spanish influenza epidemic hit Alberta in 1919, the Women's Institutes saw a need for instruction in home-nursing and care of the sick. Short course schools in home nursing and first-aid were offered at 54 Women's Institute

centers throughout the province between 1920 and 1923, with a total enrollment of 3,409 women (29).

In 1924, a new departure in short courses was made. The first annual Women's Institute Short Course, lasting a month, was held at the new Agricultural School at Doak. Branch Institutes were forwarded an outline of the course and were asked to pay the expenses of a representative, who, on returning home, would act as a community leader and would give lectures and demonstrations on the theory and practical work taught at the school. Cooking, millinery, dressmaking and household arts were daily classes. A public health nurse gave lectures for two weeks. There were also agricultural subjects, such as dairying, beekeeping and poultry raising. In later years, banking and business skills were introduced into the course.

b) Loan Papers

By 1910 the Departments of Agriculture in Ontario, New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia had accumulated a collection of pamphlets and papers on a variety of subjects. These were written by government organizers and Institute members and were referred to as loan papers. According to Edith Rowes there were pamphlets on:

> "Stocking Winter Gardens
> Care of the Sick Room
> Household Sanitation
> Little Economics
> Harmful Weeds
> Infant Hygiene
> How to get more eggs
> Hay-box Cooking
> Beekeeping
> Land Settlement Schemes"(30).

Alice Ravenhill, an early Institute organizer working for the Ontario Department of Agriculture, wrote some of the first educational pamphlets that were used as loan papers. Her first pamphlets were entitled: "Food Preservation", "Homemakers", "Labour Saving Devices", "Nutritional Aids" and "Home Health First Aid" (31).

The loan papers produced by Ravenhill and others were kept on file at the Provincial Department of Agriculture offices. Members of the Institutes could request the loan papers for a two week study period.

In most instances, they were used to prepare for a demonstration or lecture for women in their community. In 1915, 350 loan papers were sent out on loan to Institutes in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The need for contact with other women is expressed over and over again in written records of pioneer times. The early Women's Institutes in Canada were unique. Organized to supply education and facilitate a social bond among the women of the rural areas, prior to the days of the movies and the radio they provided the best and sometimes the only opportunity for rural women to learn and socialize amongst themselves.

IV DEPRESSION AND SECOND WAR PERIOD

1 - The Y.W.C.A.

a) Depression Years

In the thirties, with so many women thrown out of employment, industrial and economic problems took on a new seriousness and urgency. With women unemployed, the Y.W.C.A. directed its energies to women "without work, without homes, without money."

In co-operation with other community agencies, Y.W.C.A.'s across the country faced the challenge of putting all its resources at the service of women in need. Home and shelter were provided in Y.W.C.A. residences; the opportunity to practise various types of skills such as cooking, dressmaking, typewriting was given in the education departments; facilities for recreation were offered through the clubs and physical departments of the association.

To establish some of these unemployed women in new vocations, special courses for houseworkers were promoted by national staff. These were tried in Victoria, Vancouver, St. Catherines, Halifax, Hamilton, Toronto, Kingston, Montreal and Saint John. These courses ameliorated unemployment and helped meet the demand for skilled part-time domestic help. The first course offered by the Montreal Y.W.C.A. in 1932, certified the women as "skilled household helpers". Four years later,/162 unemployed women enrolled in courses for domestics at the Montreal Y.W.C.A. Historian Marjorie Ford, described the course:

> "The course of four weeks covers careful instruction in the preparation and serving of simple meals, including invalid trays and afternoon teas, the daily care of the home, laundering of table linen and children's clothes, mending, the care of silver and brass and household etiquette"(32).

In January 1934, the Board of Directors of the Vancouver Y.W.C.A. passed a resolution dealing with job training. It recommended that the Y.W.C.A. introduce a course for household helpers. It is noted in the minutes:

> "That there is felt to be a great need for training of young women for household helpers, and that a course for training will be a justifiable experiment for the Y.W.C.A. to undertake; and that the course should be repeated and continued if successful"(33).

The Board set up a committee to investigate the possibilities of organizing such a course. Within a month, the Vancouver Y.W.C.A. had recruited 25 women from various welfare agencies, secured a teacher, and provided accommodation for the course. The Provincial Department of Education paid the teacher's salary and supplied materials. The household helpers course was for women 16 to 30 years of age, and covered instruction, one day a week of practical work in a home, demonstration of the use of electrical equipment by the B.C. Electric and talks on health, etiquette, home emergencies and cooking. The Y.W.C.A. arranged jobs for all the "graduates" from the first course; their average wage was twelve dollars a month. The first household helpers course was a success and

throughout the depression years many more were organized throughout the nation.

In Toronto, the Y.W.C.A. formed a central committee on education and recreation for the unemployed. The committee was composed of representatives of church organizations, Y.M.C.A., the Workers Educational Association and the Trade and Labour Council. It was formed in 1932 for the purpose of providing opportunities for the education of the employed (34).

The National Council of Women had sent to all of its members in Canada that had initiated courses for household houseworkers, including the Y.W.C.A.'s, a proposal to endorse a domestic workers code which embodied resolutions for minimum wages and maximum hours for domestic workers. All of the Y.W.C.A.'s did promote the houseworkers code and worked towards establishing regular hours of work and a minimum of wage for Canada's 134,000 domestics.

Many Y.W.C.A.'s across Canada (in 1939 there were forty-one associations with a membership of 28,000 individuals) also operated clubs for unemployed women in co-operation with several other women's groups, primarily the Business and Professional Women's Clubs. The purpose of the clubs was to preserve the moral independence and health of women deprived of employment. The women were offered classes in a variety of subjects, including typing, sewing and stenography. They all acquired additional skills which stood them in good stead when there was a chance for employment. These clubs flourished in Western Canada, particularly in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert,

Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary and Edmonton. Five hundred women were registered in women's clubs in the Y's in Saskatchewan in 1938, including the Old Country Club, Friendship Fellowship and Worship Club, Dramatic Club, Glee Club and the Hostess Club. In the Sandiford survey of 1935 he notes that:

> "The Y.W.C.A. in both Calgary and Edmonton has been carrying classes for both employed and unemployed women. A class of about 50 women enrolled in English at the Calgary Y.W.C.A. in 1933. Special programs for unemployed women have been arranged in subjects such as training in leadership, public speaking, religious education, health and household science, and conducting meetings"(35).

The Health Education program expanded rapidly during the 1920's and 1930's. In 1930 the Y.W.C.A.'s in London and Windsor, in co-operation with the Y.M.C.A. gave a series of lectures on "homemaking", covering engagement, marriage, children and family finance. A Health Education conference, initiated by the Y.W.C.A. of St. Catherines in September 1931, for Health and Physical Educators in Y.W.C.A.'s in Ontario and Quebec, stressed the importance of extending recreation education into adult life.

b) Second War Period

During the Second World War, the Y.W.C.A. focussed its adult education efforts on matters related to the war effort. An underlying policy, which continued to guide the movement, was that regular activities must be continued and war work added as need arose. A letter to the associations from the

national office in 1939 stressed this important principle. It said:

> "The emphasis of health and recreation education is more than ever needed for young women who are thrust into a world of greater physical and emotional strain"(36).

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the National Council of the Y.W.C.A. offered their services to the government in whatever capacity they could best be used. A War Services Committee was created in 1940. Associations across the country had begun active war services of many kinds including the opening of Hostess Houses in Montreal, Ottawa, Saint John and Vancouver. In the Hostess Houses, clubs were organized for servicemen's wives. These provided educational and recreational outlets in the form of varied handicrafts, sewing for the Red Cross, training in child care, cooking, music appreciation and varied social and educational activities ranging from bridge parties to concerts. The importance of social education was stressed by Innis in an article in the Y.W.C.A. Quarterly in 1943:

> "Women are taken by the "Y" leaders to the art gallery or the museum for conducted tours of the exhibits and later to the Hostess Houses for tea and socialization. The Y.W.C.A. supervises and secures tickets for cultural and recreational activities such as concerts, plays, radio shows, hockey matches, bowling, swimming and dancing. We go together as a group which always makes for more enjoyment. The highlight

> of these outings is usually the formal or informal discussions that happen when we meet back at the Hostess Houses"(37).

Many leaders emerged from the informal kinds of educational and recreational activities that happened in the Hostess Houses. Many women who joined as regular members were encouraged by "Y" leaders to develop themselves by using opportunities within the Hostess Houses. These women then became leaders of Hostess House women's groups themselves.

After the war, some Y.W.C.A. Hostess Houses were still serving women. In Regina in 1947 the Y.W. House accommodated 62 women, many of whom were taking commercial or dressmaking courses at the Canadian Vocational Training School. In Prince Albert, in 1947, knitting and sewing classes were held in the Hostess House. Fifty girls enrolled for the dressmaking and millinery course. The Singer Sewing Machine Company loaned machines for the classes.

In the First World War, the Y.W.C.A. had set up eight Hostess Houses. In the Second World War the National War Services Committee of the Y.W.C.A. had established 38 Hostess Houses and seven Hostess Rooms across Canada.

In 1943 when Japanese Canadian girls were evacuated from the West coast, a request was received from the Dominion Department of Labour asking that the Y.W.C.A. be responsible for the placement, supervision and job upgrading of Japanese household workers in eastern Canada. Between 1943 and 1945 Government subsidies were granted to Toronto, Hamilton, Saint

Catherines and Winnipeg associations to do this work.

At the National Convention in Hamilton in 1940, a resolution was adopted that:

> "the Y.W.C.A. of Canada, through counselling, education and program take special concern for the single women in the post-war period"(38).

It was felt that during this war period there would be a tremendous adjustment in the lives of women, particularly in the denial to a large number of women of the accepted role of marriage. This resolution was first implemented by the formation in some associations in the late forties of clubs for adult women.

2 - Depression and Second War Period-Women's Institute

a) Citizenship Education

The aim of citizenship education within the Women's Institute was to encourage the life-long development of every citizen both as an individual and a member of their community.

The depression years brought a new awakening for Institute members to their responsibilities as community leaders in educating other women to take responsibility for themselves and their communities.

A number of Institutes in New Brunswick, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia were studying laws relating to women and children. Individual Institutes embarked on special study of The Old Age Pension Act, The Mother's Allowance Act, The Minimum Wage Act for Women and Girls, and the Devolution of the Estate Act. Moncton Women's Institute was one of the first to study the Old Age Pensions Act and make recommendations to the Federal Government to change this act.

In co-operation with the Federal and Provincial Departments of Health, many Institutes were instrumental in educating Canadian women in the preventive health field. Notable work was done in the thirties and forties in educating women to the benefits derived from the use of vaccines and serums, thereby helping to overcome prejudice and ignorance.

In Saskatchewan, the Institutes were primarily concerned with mothers' lack of information on family health care.

In numerous towns, the Women's Institute petitioned for a public health nurse, who would tend to immediate health

problems and educate mothers in preventive health care and self help. In many cases public health nurses were sent by Provincial Health Departments into towns and small communities because of the collective action and requests from the Institutes.

Three things usually happened when citizenship education was undertaken by an Institute:

(a) the women themselves made decisions about matters of common concern in their local community.

(b) the women of the individual Institutes organized themselves for planning and action.

(c) the women experienced personal growth by working together to achieve common goals.

In short, this work had some of the characteristics of Community Development, a concept encompassing programs which stressed citizen participation in the improvement of ones physical and social environment. The Women's Institute was one of the first adult education movements to practice the concept of community development, which occurred when geographical neighbours worked together to serve their concept of the good of the community. This included organization, participation, planning, decision making, action and change, focusing on citizen participation in the improvement of the physical, intellectual, economic and social environment of the community. The focus of citizenship education and thus, community development, was a prominent feature in those early years within the Women's Institute Movement.

b) Study Circles

Study groups developed in the mid thirties, when it became evident that Institute women were not content to sit back and listen to lectures. They wanted a more active role in the educational part of their Institute meetings. The first study group was planned by the Stonehaven Women's Institute. Their topic concerned the legal status of women on rural school boards. The 1935 Annual Report of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada notes that:

> "Study circles were initiated in 1935, one of the first taking place in Stonehaven. The topic the Status of Women on School Boards was pertinent as in New Brunswick many rural districts did not allow women to attend school board meetings"(39).

The number of study groups grew quickly, especially in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. The development of the National Farm Radio Forum and the Citizens Forum in the early forties gave a heightened importance to use of the Study Circle as a method to aid in the education of rural women.

A 1943 circular sent to Women's Institutes urged leaders to use the tools of the National Farm Radio Forum and Citizens Forum to build on their existing study groups. The circular urged:

> "(a) regular attendance at all study circles.
> (b) read thoroughly the study material provided.
> (c) listen to the radio broadcast as a total study group.

(d) have a lively discussion after each broadcast.
(e) ensure the secretary sends a report to the provincial headquarters each week.
(f) distribute study material for the next study circle.
(g) appoint a discussion leader for the next study circle meeting"(40).

The Farm Forum was especially effective with the Women's Institute because following the depression of the thirties women faced economic and social problems on which they had little information to base judgements. Farm Forum topics that were utilized with Women's Institutes did not deal with farm problems as such, but with the ordinary problems of everyday living: better schools, public health, child welfare, and vocational training.

In 1945 eighty-three Women's Institutes were using either the National Farm Radio Forum or the Citizens Forum as an integral part of their weekly meetings (41).

The study circles combined social activity with study of a special topic, a concept borrowed from the Y.M.-Y.W.C.A. "So-ed" program. The women were as anxious to participate in the study circles for the sociability as they were for the intellectual stimulus. In an article about Women's Institutes Helen Morton describes study circles:

> "Study was combined with sociability - the women held their study meetings in one anothers homes and there was always a tea party afterwards"(42).

All study groups involved a learning situation which

conformed to the characteristics of the group, so that learning was achieved in the group as a unit, as well as by individual members.

In looking back on the ideals of the Women's Institute it is to be noted that during this period the ladies followed adult education principles that are in practice today. As far as possible everyone had an active part in planning the weekly Women's Institute program. They prepared their own papers, and gave their own demonstrations and therefore from the beginning they learned to do, by doing. Thus one of the basic principles of learning, the active involvement of the individual in the learning task was a basis of the Institute.

Even though citizenship education and study circles were predominant components of the Women's Institute Movement in the thirties and forties, the majority of farm women still did not see the need for adult education for themselves. There did not seem to be an antagonism against adult education, but in some cases there seemed to be an ignorance regarding its possibilities. An article published in 1939 about the Women's Institutes puts it this way:

> "Too many farm women have settled into a rut in their lives and accepted their restrictions, their conditions, their limitations, while unfortunately they have not accepted their opportunities and responsibilities----there are many farm women who have accepted the conception that the sole function of education is preparation for making a living.. They have not broadened it to think of it as preparation for living"(43).

c) Cottage Industries

Many women valued the Institutes for their social interaction, some for the educational value to themselves, while others looked to the Institute for its work in teaching home crafts. As early as 1918 three schools of domestic industries were organized by Institutes in Quebec City, Ste. Martine de Chatenuguay and Montreal. These schools piggy-backed on the great campaign at the time for "superproduction agricole" which emphasized working with the hands (44).

Emphasis on domestic, or cottage industries, was characteristic of many Institutes, where women began to study flax, tow, cloth, wool, spinning and weaving; natural and commercial dyes; making carpets, mats, furniture covers and textile fabrics in general.

The Institutes of Fredericton, Smith Creek, Apolaqui and Truro in 1934 - 1935 offered short courses in bead work, petit-point, tapestry, rughooking, quilting and knitting. Over 2,500 women were involved in these courses in 1935 in thirteen Nova Scotian and New Brunswick Institutes.

In British Columbia, the Women's Institutes inspired other women to build looms and spinning wheels such as they had used in their homelands. They taught women to adapt the crafts of the old world to the needs of the new. The Women's Institute Weavers Guild was organized in 1934 in Victoria, to encourage the art of weaving and self expression, and to bring weaving as a handicraft before the public, through the media of demonstrations and exhibits (45). Many kinds of handicrafts

were taught to women through the Women's Institute Weavers Guild in other British Columbia communities such as Hope, Slocan Valley and Lone Butte.

V ADULT EDUCATION IN THE FIFTIES SIXTIES AND SEVENTIES

1 - The Y.W.C.A.

a) Young Adult Clubs

In the early 1950's, Y.W.C.A. adult education activities were extended into the suburbs and rural areas where women needed recreation, education and social life, but lived too far from a Y.W.C.A. building to visit it regularly. Community centre and school board education and recreation programs were only just scratching the surface in most communities in Canada. In many communities the Y.W.C.A. was one of few organizations that offered extension programs in recreation and adult education.

One of the mushrooming programs which were developing in many Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.'s was the young adult clubs. Young adults in the Y.W.C.A.in the fifties were between the ages of 18 and 30 years and were composed mainly of office workers, sales girls, domestics, laboratory technicians, young married women and professional women such as teachers and nurses.

The activities of the young adult clubs varied from association to association, but a national conference of young adult leaders which was held each year for nearly a decade, made it possible to develop some consistency in policy and objectives. A young adult session at the twentieth National Convention of the Y.W.C.A. of Canada in Vancouver in June 1957, concluded that the current needs and interests of young adults

that would be transferred into programs were:

a. Fellowship and friends,

b. Spiritual guidance,

c. Health education,

d. Education topics for discussion such as civic affairs, international affairs, citizenship, education, rural housing, racial discrimination, automation, preparation for marriage, budgeting, leadership training,

e. Recreational activities.

Adult education methods for learning were not as sophisticated then as they are today but one of the most popular methods for fostering adult learning in the Y.W. in the fifties was the study group. A few of the topics of study were described by Ruth Hurst in the Y.W.C.A. Quarterly Magazine:

> "Of continent wide interest in "Y" adult groups is "How to be happy - though married". The adult club of Halifax is holding five study sessions on the subject and out on the west coast at Vancouver the adult club is holding study sessions on "Passport to Happiness" dealing with the same enthralling topic. The Vancouver and Halifax programs are follow-ups on study groups that the young adult club held for several months on Love and Marriage" (46).

Family finance seemed to be very much on the minds of young women, and between 1953 and 1958 some programs dealing with family finance could be found in 22 young adult clubs

in Y's in Canada. A typical program included:

a. Cost of adequate maintenance and protection of health,

b. Life insurance, endowments, annuities, social security, taxes, cost of operating a car,

c. How to borrow money,

d. How to save money - postal savings, bank and government bonds.

Many Y.W.C.A.'s became Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.'s in the fifties and therefore, co-educational young adult clubs developed in most associations. The response to this in Y.M.C.A.'s and Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.'s was a similar program called So-Ed. So-Ed, meaning social education, helped individuals develop a social conscience; acquire an informal and critical attitude towards public affairs; learn specific skills, and develop themselves personally, socially and morally. Democratic organization was a characteristic of So-Ed. Any adult could sit on the young adult club committee and assist with the planning and presentation of the program. The entire responsibility for the planning, promotion and operation of the program was carried by these committees. Hundreds of young adults gave their time voluntarily for the betterment of the young adult clubs and the Y.

Frequently, young adults asked for activities which were based on occupational specialities. Y's opened clubs for bank tellers, nurses aids, retail salesgirls and business girls. They wished the stimulation of meeting other people

with the same interest in learning physical skills which promote good health and well-being, and social skills which give self-confidence.

b) Day-Time Programs for Women

In the mid-fifties, the Y.W.C.A. introduced day-time programs for young mothers and housewives known, depending on their location as Take-a-Break, Housewives Holiday, Ladies Day Out, Holiday for Wives, Y-Step Out or Wednesday at the Y. The development of these women's groups in Canada flourished in the fifties, and carried on into the sixties, using Y.W. buildings, storefronts, church basements, housing developments, schools, community centers and, in extreme situations where meeting space was at a premium, womens washrooms, changing rooms or basements in women's homes.

The first program of this kind for women was reported by the Montreal Y.W.C.A. in 1953. In 1954, sixteen associations reported Ladies Day Out programs for 511 mothers and housewives, and in 1958, 25 associations attracted 1,709 women to this program. All of these groups grew out of the concern of the Y.W.C.A. of Canada about the lack of group services for young mothers, a concern reported in their brief to the 1964 Vanier Conference on the family (47). The program was designed for mothers with preschool children, and other interested homemakers. The objectives were to provide a recreational and educational program, with opportunities to follow up on established interests and to develop new ones.

The Ladies Day Out programs succeeded in meeting some

pressing needs of young mothers at that time. The programs provided opportunities for recreation with provision made for child care. The women made new friends, enjoyed the companionship of their peers, learned new skills, and broadened their interests. Through participation in planning their own programs, they developed their leadership capacities. With their emphasis on group participation in programming and the development of individual skills and interests, these programs were logical recruiting ground for indigenous leadership. Many participants became committee and Board members of their local Y. A survey of the Ladies Day Out programs conducted by the National Office in 1958, indicated how participation in the program helped build a women's self concept:

> "I think a lot of women lose self-confidence in themselves when they stay at home and rear a family. Ladies Day Out has helped me restore some of my self confidence because we meet new people, talk over problems and find that most women feel just as we do. Also I am learning new skills that I never would if I were home alone all day"(48).

Involvement of the participants in the planning of their own programs has always been a characteristic of adult programs within the Y.W.C.A. Within the Ladies Day Out programs, the professional leader was there, more as a resource person who encouraged the women to develop as much of the program as they could themselves. Groups that were encouraged by the leader to plan, design, implement and evaluate their own program, seemed to develop their own leaders, women who

quite often emerged as individuals who had leadership potential to lead a Ladies Day Out group of their own.

In the autumn of 1968, three students in a course in Community Education and Development in the Department of Adult Education of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education arranged with the Metropolitan Y.W.C.A. of Toronto to undertake a study of Take-A-Break groups and their contribution to the continuing education of women from the point of view of community development. Their report saw the T.A.B. group educating the women for the betterment of their own community. The authors note:

> "We envisaged the role which the T.A.B. group and the Y.W.C.A. are playing in the continuing education of women as a meaningful and valuable contribution to the development of the community. When one considers the agonizing dichotomy of roles which bewilders and paralyzes many women today, it becomes blatantly evident that a need exists for some organizations to assist women in re-orienting themselves and in establishing some equilibrium in our emancipated roles"(49).

It is interesting to note that twenty years later this type of program is still operating in over twenty Y's in Canada. In some Y.M.-Y.W.C.A.'s, the program is being revived under different names but basically, the objectives of the program are the same. Recreation and community centres piggy-backed on this program in the late sixties, so the need for the "Y" to organize this program, especially in large urban areas, is not as great as it was twenty years ago.

Still, as in so many other areas, the "Y" pioneered in women's groups, and met a need that no other organization could, or did, at the time.

Women's Neighbourhood Groups, Y Neighbours, Mothers Day Out or T.A.B.'s, - whatever the name, - these groups will continue to grow and change in Y's in Canada. As long as there are women who want to take time out from their busy, frustrating or lonely lives to meet other women and share feelings, activities, skills and knowledge in a friendly and supportive atmosphere, the programs will be provided.

c) Job Up-Grading

Helping women upgrade their skills for specific job markets has always been an important thrust in adult education within the Y.W.C.A. of Canada. Annual Reports of Y's across the country in the fifties and sixties consistently mention programs to upgrade womens skills for employment.

In the late fifties, typing, shorthand and bookkeeping courses were offered by virtually every Y across the country.

In 1960, Hamilton Y.W.C.A. initiated a practice and retraining program for women 18 to 35 who were unemployed. The Hamilton YW wanted to reach women seeking jobs because their menfolk were unemployed or had lost jobs because of inadequate training. Courses in typing and shorthand were offered initially, in consultation with the National Employment Service. This was enlarged to include a training course for sales personnel and waitresses called "Personal Improvement", incorporating poise, charm, gaining self-confidence, fine

points of selling, how to apply for a job, etiquette and table setting (50).

Brandon Y.W.C.A. offered a waitress training program in the early sixties the aims of which were to upgrade the service and perhaps more important to upgrade the status of the waitress in her own eyes and in the eyes of the general public.

Specific training courses for women in the fields of sales, telephone communications, hospitality personnel, business machines, waitressing, bookkeeping and stenography were sponsored by many in Canada in the 1950's and early 1960's. Job upgrading and retraining programs were viable in Y's where there were no vocational schools in the community.

In the 1970's, job-upgrading and training programs are still predominant in Y's across Canada, particularly for immigrant women. In Vancouver in 1974, 144 Chinese and East Indian women received job training related to food services and the hospitality trades. The women received training in English, as well as work skills, and were provided with personal counselling and cultural orientation. This "Women-In-Training" program, which is still in operation is planned in co-operation with the Federal Employment and Immigration Commission and funded by the Provincial Ministry of Education Science and Technology of British Columbia.

d) Roles of Women

The baby boom of the 1950's, combined with the fact that more women were entering the work force, meant that despite the lack of child care facilities, more married women with small

children were working outside the home. Many conferences and workshops on the role of women were held in Canada during this period, reflecting the changing consciousness about women's life. The one held at the Montreal Y.W.C.A. in 1961 on "Women at Work," which studied the impact on individuals and the community of the increase in the number of working wives, was typical of this type of event.

In 1962 a "Roles of Women" study was initiated by the Y.W.C.A. of Canada to determine what the Y.W.C.A. could do to identify the concerns of women in present day society, and their dilemma in the changing social situation. Following two years of study involving 700 women participating in "Y" programs, the research indicated the highest priorities and major concerns had to do with continuing education and part-time employment for women. These priorities were then reflected in the programs and services offered by the Y.W.C.A.'s, as well as in briefs that were sent to the Federal and Provincial Governments. These briefs, called for income-tax relief for part-time working women who must provide day-care for their dependents and also for support, in the form of grants, for part-time students in daytime and evening courses.

The Y.W.C.A. has long been aware of the need to improve the role and status of women and to help women use their collective power to eliminate inequalities wherever these may exist. Steps in this direction were taken before the turn of the century in the munition factory in Toronto, where women were working eighteen hour days, and has taken various forms

throughout the years. In 1951 twenty-one Y.W.C.A.'s had active Public Affairs Committees which focused their work on anti-discrimination and equal pay for equal work for women. In the sixties these Public Affairs Committees called for supportive services for working women with family responsibilities and for a recognized status for homemaking services.

Today social action study groups are active in most Y.W.C.A.'s in Canada, looking into political and social issues such as: recognition of refugees and political prisoners in Third World countries; recognition of the homemakers inclusion in the Canadian Pension Plan; reform of federal legislation on abortion; stance on capital punishment; and reform of income tax deductions to charitable organizations.

2 - The Women's Institutes: Fifties, Sixties and Seventies

Following the war, the Women's Institute Movement continued to expand, especially in the isolated rural communities of northern Canada.

The Institute became a "rural women's university" to thousands of women who saw the Institute activities as an answer to loneliness, and as a means of pursuing their education. In many isolated communities, and on rural farms, the Institute was the only organization where women could get together with other women to learn, grow and develop themselves by individual or group study and action.

a) Co-operative Adult Education

Growth of the Women's Institutes in the north, such as in Aklavik, Discovery, Fort McPherson, Inuvik, Haines Junction and Fort Simpson, was aided in the 1950's and 1960's by assistance from the Department of Northern Affairs division of Adult Education. Many co-operative programs in the area of citizenship study were instigated. Such studies included: conservation of natural and human resources; maternal and infant mortality; laws affecting women; campaigns to have women in the Senate; abolition of salacious literature; integration of old and new Canadians; and immigration and assistance for newcomers to Canada. From these studies and campaigns came many local, provincial and national reforms, and changes for the good of both members and communities. This type of community involvement was a highly effective form of education for the Institute women as it motivated them to learn as a

group and then gave them the opportunity to apply what they learned to actual conditions in the community. Women began to realize that through the resources provided by their Institute, they could raise the standard of living of their community from a social and economic viewpoint. Geographical neighbours who formed Women's Institutes in Northern Canada saw that they could effect change in their local community by study, participation, organization, decision making and action on local issues.

The essence of community growth and development was portrayed through the Women's Institutes in many communities. Through the tool of adult education, Institutes helped make women aware that their standard of living not only depended on their earning power, but also upon the quality of the amenities provided through the resources of the local community. In northern communities one of the most vibrant resources was the Women's Institute, where there was such an organization.

In the last decade Women's Institutes have worked co-operatively with many government departments, volunteer organizations, educational agencies and health organizations. An example of this co-operative programming was the 1977 workshop sponsored by the Women's Institute's of Newfoundland, and the Newfoundland Status of Women Council. These two women's organizations jointly sponsored a two day conference - "Women - Where are we in Community Action?" The workshop, attended by 250 women, included: problems women face in gaining influential community positions; speaking effectively;

the need to appoint women to policy making bodies; using the media; recognizing and developing leadership potential; running for political office; and running an effective organization (51).

Co-operation in this sense not only meant benefitting from the resource and skills of each organization but also contributing knowledge, skill, experience, and service in order to have a greater constructive impact on the life of the individuals in the community. One of the values of such co-operation is a constant review of the needs for learning by groups sufficiently representative so that no aspect of learning is pushed aside.

In connection with the Extension Division of the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Women's Institute, with a grant from the Citizenship Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State, had a series of six workshops in twelve community colleges in 1975. The workshops focused on women and economic development, and on how women can and must demand full participation in the planning, governing and evaluating process of economic development decisions that affect their communities.

Many workshops in health and family life education were organized by the Women's Institutes in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba in the 1960's and into the 1970's. One of these workshops in Warspite Alberta, drew over sixty pregnant housewives who were interested in the topic "Diet and Nutrition for Mothers to Be".

The last ten years have seen many Leadership Development opportunities provided for the women of the Institutes. In 1976, five of the six Women's Institutes regions in Manitoba held a one day mini-leadership school with a total of 306 women in attendance. A variety of programs were presented: nutrition and fitness; family life education; confidence building; the status of women in Manitoba; educational opportunities for Manitoba women, and proposals for changes in the marital property laws. An interesting feature to these series of workshops was that the facilitators for all the mini-leadership schools were women who were members of the Institutes throughout Manitoba.

A 3 day seminar in Inuvik planned jointly by the home management section of the Department of Continuing Education, North West Territories, and the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada involved 52 women in discussions on topics of home management, focusing especially on nutrition. This seminar brought together women from the Indian settlements along the Mackenzie as well as Institute members from Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Tuktoyuktuk, Fort Smith, Fort Norman and Yellowknife. Seminars in many isolated areas of the North West Territories and the Yukon have also been sponsored by northern Canadian Institutes, to draw public attention to the Native women, in their struggle for equal rights within the Indian Act (52).

One of the few co-operative ventures ever to take place between the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute happens in

Thompson Manitoba, where the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute combined their resources to educate Native Indian women in life skills. The area surrounding Thompson, up to a few years ago, was completely isolated without communication systems or hydro power. In the last five years the women of Thompson and other surrounding isolated communities through the leadership of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute have learned how to use radio and dial telephone, as well as many other life skills such as how to use and care for electric appliances. This type of life skills education could be called survival education, as it is education that is necessary for the rural women to survive in a northern isolated community.

A project of the Role of Women Committee of the Canadian Council of Rural Development received the co-operation of many of the Women's Institute branches. In 1976 and 1977 over 200 Institute members participated in a survey entitled "Women's Work in Rural Canada" which looked at the role of women in rural development.

b) Social Action

The distance rural women need to travel to receive education has been a concern of the Women's Institute for many years. Several Institutes have been actively involved in trying to implement the recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970), which called for the provincial governments to take appropriate action to study the current educational needs and interests of women in rural areas and, in consultation with local people, introduce more adequate

programmes ensuring that they are available to women. This recommendation of the Royal Commission is far from being implemented. Rural women especially in Saskatchewan and Manitoba still do not have the same access to educational opportunities that urban women have. Many Institutes in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, most notably in Great Falls, Churchill, Thompson and Yorkton, have engaged in group study and action of this issue. Leaders of these Institutes have met with government officials, lobbied all political parties and candidates in their area by phone and letter, examined existing provincial educational opportunities for adult women and submitted a brief.

Since many Women's Institutes in the last 10 years have become active in women's issues, training for action has become necessary for Women's Institute leaders. Last year a workshop sponsored by the Manitoba Women's Institute and the Manitoba Action Committee for the Status of Women focused on advocacy activities which would draw attention to women's issues and were designed to precipitate some action on the part of Government. Mini-workshops were offered on establishing support, telephone and letter lobbying, working from within the bureaucracy, and adopting a minister. These workshops helped give individual leaders of Women's Institutes skills to bring back to their members to help them mobilize and work on issues of concern such as rights of Indian women, Matrimonial property, and day care (54).

The changes in focus of the Women's Institute have been

dramatic over the last 80 years. When one considers that concerns in the early years centered around such things as food preservation and then look at today's issues such as, matrimonial property rights for women, women and the Canadian Pension Plan, maternity rights, domestic and farm worker's labour rights, one can see that the Women's Institutes are now trying to educate women on broader social issues that will improve the status of women in Canada.

VI THE ROLE OF ADULT EDUCATION IN Y.W.C.A. AND THE WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

1 - Function and Purpose of Adult Education

a) In the Y.W.C.A. of Canada

Adult education in the Y.W.C.A. aims at helping people to develop their capacity to live fuller lives in a world of rapid social change. In addition to presenting information and knowledge or serving to develop skills and appreciation, many programs are designed to bring about change within the individual. As a women's organization, the Y.W.C.A. tries to improve the status of women by helping members know their rights and responsibilities and make use of opportunities for action. It tries to promote a social consciousness in women. To increase women's participation and competence in civic life, it tries to improve education for citizenship by preparing women to deal with controversy and conflict.

In 1972, a questionnaire on adult education in Canada was completed by a National Y.W.C.A. task group to assist the World Y.W.C.A. in its participation in a world conference on adult education. The task group's definition of adult education was: an organized activity whose purpose is to foster in the adult the development of attitudes, skills or knowledge that will equip an individual to perform his role in society. It includes vocational and avocational training, leadership development, citizenship organization and mass education.

Adult education in the Y.W.C.A. is conceived as a process of life-long learning. There is a concern for the

total person: mind, body and spirit. Over the years, adult education for women has been active in the areas of:

1. religious education,
2. education for international responsibility,
3. leadership development of women,
4. education for citizenship and social responsibility,
5. education in the preparation for work and job up-grading,
6. education in the preparation and use of leisure time,
7. education for the personal development of women.

Some of the most significant functions or purposes of adult education are: a means to coping or solving an individual's personal problems; relieving boredom; self improvement; socializing and to meet people; financial advancement; and for learning itself.

As the world's largest women's organization, the Y.W.C.A. believes that women require opportunities for developing their intellectual potential to the maximum. However, the Y.W.C.A. can not develop a woman; it can help a woman to develop herself. It is the goal of the Y.W.C.A. to provide the individual woman with options for education, employment and recreation, so she can choose a lifestyle and realize her own aims according to her own choice.

b) In the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada

Within the Women's Institute, adult education has been able to help women cope with the changing social and environmental conditions of the times by disseminating knowledge, developing new skills, and changing attitudes.

Adult education has been seen as a natural and enjoyable activity leading to the full development of the personality. Women participate in the adult education activities of the Institute for knowledge, self expression, creativity, enjoyable experience, freedom and for fellowship.

As in the case of the Y.W.C.A., adult education for women has been active in the areas of:

1. citizenship education,
2. community development,
3. leadership development,
4. education in the use of leisure time,
5. domestic science education.

The purpose of adult education in the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada has been, to provide educational opportunities for women, so that all Institute women will take it for granted that education is a continuous part, not only of the responsibility of living but also of the joy of life.

c) Relationship of Adult Education to the Function of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute

There are a variety of different ways in which adult education is related to the function of the institution. The degree to which adult education is related to institutional

function is delineated in the following typology.

1. Institutions for which adult education is the primary function,
2. Institutions for which adult education is an extension of the primary function,
3. Institutions for which adult education is a means to the achievement of a primary function (55).

The Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute are both institutions for which adult education is a means to the achievement of a primary function. Both institutions were created to meet needs that were not related to education, but ultimately they came to depend upon adult education in order to achieve their primary purpose.

In the beginning stages of the Y.W.C.A., before the turn of the century, adult education was used as a tool to achieve the primary purpose of "promoting the spiritual, intellectual, physical and social condition of all young women."

Adult education was also a means of achieving the primary function of the Women's Institute, in its early years "to promote the knowledge of Household Science with a view of raising the general standard of the health of our people."

The purpose of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute have changed over the years, and today adult education is still used as a means to achieve the purpose of both movements.

> Y.W.C.A. purpose: "Enriched by the Christian Faith and World Wide Membership, the Y.W.C.A. seeks to provide opportunities for personal growth, deepen

> concern for human need and act responsibly in the World Community"(56).
>
> Women's Institute purpose: "To promote an appreciation of rural living. To develop better informed, more responsible citizens, through the study of issues of National and International importance"(57).

Adult education has been used to achieve the purpose of the Women's Institute and the Y.W.C.A. in the following ways:

1. helping women to act responsibly in their local community,
2. helping women to learn to become more productive citizens,
3. teaching women how to make productive and creative use of their leisure time,
4. helping women acquire a degree of happiness and meaning in life,
5. providing opportunities to help women advance in the maturation process - physically, mentally, emotionally, and culturally,
6. providing education for healthier living,
7. helping individuals understand themselves, their talents and their relationships with other people.

Adult education within the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute will continue to be the most effective instrument to enable these two women's movements to achieve their primary purpose, function and mission in Canadian society.

2 - Comparison of the Role of Adult Education in the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century adult education in the Y.W.C.A. was aimed at upper and middle class women who had the time and the financial means to allow them many options for use of their leisure time. It was not until the early 1900's that the "Y" became involved in educational activities with working class women in the factories in eastern Canada. Throughout the twentieth century the emphasis that the Y.W.C.A. placed on adult education was a response to the social, economic and political developments of the day. Factory work was instigated when immigration was at its peak and industrialization drew many women into the urban centers; programs for household helpers were established when so many women were out of work during the depression; educational and social activities were established in the many Hostess Houses during the war; the move of young families to the suburbs in the 50's and 60's and the Y's response to the isolation of the young housewife in its Take-A-Break programs and the response of the "Y" today towards the changing role of women.

The Women's Institute in comparison has been more traditional in its approach to adult education. It has for the most part involved the rural middle class housewife in leisure and home related adult education activities. It has been only in the last five years that the Women's Institute has utilized adult education over a wider range of subject matter, and in doing so has thus become more active in social issues. Adult

education has played a more prominent role in furthering the aims of the Y.W.C.A. than has been the Women's Institute.

The Y.W.C.A. has been more flexible in its use and experimentation with adult learning techniques than has the Women's Institute. At the Y.W.C.A. Convention in 1965 participants stressed the importance of experimenting with new techniques in teaching adults in informal settings. Adult education programs should emphasize a high degree of learner involvement, and Y.W.C.A.'s in designing adult education programs have consistently utilized techniques such as listening groups, group discussion, role playing, workshops, field trips and buzz groups. The Women's Institute has not had the same experience in experimenting with the use of techniques or devices for learning. It has used the lecture, demonstration and the group discussion consistently over the years.

The Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute also differ in the client groups they have served. The Y.W.C.A. has served a wider age grouping of women from a broader spectrum of social class and ethnic background. The client groups have changed and fluctuated many times over the century in response to the changing needs and roles of women. On the other hand the Women's Institute client group has traditionally been middle class women from a rural setting. The Y.W.C.A. has over the years reached out and tried to be of service not only to their own members but to other women in the community. The Women's Institute has tended to emphasize adult education for their members.

The Y.W.C.A. has employed a larger proportion of its financial and human resources than has the Women's Institute on developing the leadership capacities of its volunteer and professional staff. The aim of such leadership development has been to bring out the full potential of women to meet the need for trained women to run the associations across the country. In 1977 at the Y.W.C.A.'s 25th National Convention the top priority was given to the recruitment, development and training of confident, competent and committed volunteers and staff who understand what the "Y" is and what it should be doing, and who have the skills to help it happen.

The Women's Institute over the years has had less financial and human resources than the Y.W.C.A. Statistics drawn from relevant reports (1977) of the two organizations show the following.

	Y.W.C.A.	W.I.
* Professional staff in Canada.....	522	15 (including provincial organiz rs)
* Active volunteers.....	60,000	52,000
* National budget.....	$425,000	$50,000
* Local association budgets.....	$31.5 million (58 local associations)	Figures not available (2,530 branches)

The Women's Institute has been declining in both membership and finances in the last twenty years, while the Y.W.C.A. has shown a steady but slow growth. It would appear that the decline of the Women's Institute may be a result of it failing

to respond effectively to changing social conditions, a fact reflected in part in the rather conservative nature of its approach to its adult education efforts.

Essential to both movements is the volunteer component: citizens giving of themselves and their talents to improve the quality of life in the community. This citizen participation is an important tool of adult education, and the interaction that takes place between the community, the organization and the people, leads to the education and growth socially, intellectually, morally and physically of all.

The concept of social change has particular relevance for the place of adult education in the voluntary association, as the voluntary association in Canadian society is one of the major mechanisms through which change takes place. The primary motivation of persons arranging societal centered adult education (education that can help change social conditions or problems) is the desire for social change. It seems likely that in these two organizations the thrust of adult education will continue to be in relation to social change.

The importance of the voluntary association as a means of promoting educational efforts has been felt for many years. In the words of the famous 1919 Report on adult education in the United Kingdom:

> "the development of the educational interests of voluntary associations, and more particularly the expansion of voluntary bodies of an educational character is one of the greatest needs of our time"(58).

and further,

> "the opportunity for adult education should be spread uniformly and systematically over the whole community, --- and that every encouragement and assistance should be given to voluntary organizations, so that their work, now necessarily sporadic, may be developed and find its proper place in the national educational system"(59).

Volunteers and volunteerism have played a large role in the growth of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute. It has been through the efforts of adult education that these volunteers have grown and expanded their capacities personally, socially, and intellectually.

Although the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute have many similarities in that they are both world-wide in scope, are both women's membership movements, and are both voluntary organizations using adult education as one of the tools to further their purpose, the differences are seen in how they have utilized adult education in doing so. This paper has documented the role of adult education in both organizations, and it has shown that the Y.W.C.A. has clearly been more flexible and innovative in its adult education programming in terms of:

a) the variety of target groups served,

b) response to the changing needs and roles of women,

c) their techniques and devices used in adult programming,

d) their co-operative efforts with other organizations,

e) response to the changing social and economic conditions in Canadian society,

f) the centrality of adult educations role in furthering the aims of the organization,

g) their utilization of a wider variety of adult education programms, including leadership development, to further their purpose,

h) their use of adult education as a tool to promote social change.

3 - The future role of Adult Education in the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute

Adult education has a future in the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute only if we regard its function in a much broader perspective than it has been viewed in the past.

When one speaks of adult education in the "Y", most individuals think of formal educational classes for women to increase their knowledge, skills or attitudes in subject areas from "exploring personal potential" to "oil painting". In this area the Y is struggling to survive, as there is probably not a class in adult education in a "Y" that is not duplicated by a School Board, Community College, Recreation Centre or other educational institution. Many Y's in Canada have found in the last few years, that the need for adult education in this sense is being met by a multitude of community organizations that are supported by tax dollars. Adult education, therefore, in many cases is being given a lower priority in the Y in comparison to its other traditional thrusts such as housing, counselling and fitness.

The future of adult education in the Y depends on how we interpret it. Adult education needs to be interpreted on a much broader base, rather than being limited to the classroom setting. At the 1975 World Y.W.C.A. conference in Vancouver, the delegates in their discussions centering around education for women thought that so far the education for women had been very stereotyped within the structure of existing society. They proclaimed:

> "We must seek wide alternatives to the closed University system; we must focus on different goals and not be as Y.W.C.A. programs have been, purely complements and supplements to existing structures. In the next four years we have to look for other, more open ways to educate those who don't fit into the rigid stereotyped kind of education available"(60).

The Y.W.C.A. has an edge on m other educational institutions in Canada, in that it has been able to provide that "first step" center where women can feel comfortable and relaxed, and get encouragement and support for the learning that they wish to pursue.

The Y.W.C.A., historically, has made a serious attempt to meet the learning needs of women. The Y's provision of support systems, such as counselling and child care, eliminate a few of the many barriers that prevent full opportunities for women in education. However, we need to move further in focusing on the reason for educating women. Some progress has been made, for in a number of Y's the move is away from traditional hobby and leisure courses and towards the retraining needs of women placing emphasis on reinforcing her self concept and re-entry into the work force. The Life Skills program of the Metropolitan Toronto Y.W.C.A., which started in 1973, is a good indication of the direction many Y.W.C.A.'s in Canada are headed in their role of providing education for women.

The status of adult education in the Women's Institute

should be elevated considering the crucial role it plays: helping women secure the attitudes, knowledge and skills needed to function more effectively as members, citizens and leaders working towards social action and social change. If the Women's Institute, through adult education, can help women secure the knowledge to deal with change, then it will achieve one of the most important purposes of adult education.

Although the Women's Institute has historically taken a relatively conservative approach in its use of adult education, its recent approaches have been encouraging. If the Women's Institute can reach out beyond its membership to other target groups, co-operate more extensively with other organizations, use adult education more effectively as a tool to promote social change and experiment more often with techniques and devices that will enhance its adult education efforts, the future role of adult education will be more vital.

The strength of the Y.W.C.A. and the Women's Institute lies in the people that are involved. If we can regard adult education as a means to help women change themselves, to deepen their insights and broaden their attitudes, then both movements have a future in this important field.

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